

# Under The Tuscan Cloud: Why You Should Go To Tuscany In The Off-Season

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Mar 13, 2024, 09:30am EDT



A visit during slow season provides travelers the opportunity to embrace the slow culture Tuscany is ... [\[+\]](#) CASTELFALFI

With films like *Under The Tuscan Sun* and *Call Me By Your Name* romanticizing Italy in the summer, it's no wonder the season is the country's busiest. But with the country seeing unprecedented numbers of visitors—last year they received an estimated [68 million visitors](#), three million more than before the pandemic in 2019—it's becoming increasingly difficult to find the magic of Italy amidst the crowds. Since the early days of Tuscany's [tourism economy](#) in the 1980s, the region has

remained a summer destination that largely shuts down to visitors during the winter months. But with the growing number of visitors in the summer, hotels in the region have gradually been expanding their seasons to open earlier and close later, providing visitors an opportunity to see Tuscany when it's not flooded with tourists.



Castelfalfi will reopen March 23, 2024, making it one of the resorts with the longest opening season ... [+] ANNA HAINES

**Castelfalfi** is one of the resorts open the longest, closing for just two months beginning in January and reopening in March. Set in the rolling hills of Tuscany an hour outside Florence, Castelfalfi is more than a hotel—it's a 2,700 estate with its own medieval village, lake, forest and vineyards, meaning you don't need to leave if you visit in the shoulder season when other tourist attractions are closed. Best of all, visiting before the summer rush means plenty of opportunities to embrace the slow culture Tuscany is beloved for.





Castelfalfi has its own 2,000-year-old village with a 800-year-old castle, clothing shops and a 15th ... [+] ANNA HAINES

Wandering the cobblestone streets of Castelfalfi's 2,000-year-old village where you'll find a 800-year-old castle, contemporary clothing shops and calming baroque music pouring out of the 15<sup>th</sup> century church, feels like a journey back in time without the crowds. With its own market and skating rink at Christmas and festivities for Easter, the village (referred to as the 'borgo') is unique for being open to and frequented by locals, unlike most resorts in the region which have closed gates. Continuing onward past the village, four hiking trails take you through the quiet rolling hills speckled with towering cypress trees and past the 27-hole golf course, the largest in Tuscany. Those seeking more of a thrill can find it ziplining through the canopy or taking a survival course, two of several activities on offer in the adventure park.

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Castelfalfi's adventure park offers ziplining and survival courses. CASTELFALFI

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Immersion in nature is Tuscany's greatest selling point and thus the thorough line of Castelfalfi. A visit during the shoulder season allows visitors to experience the Tuscan countryside through all the senses without the distraction of others. A private pizza making class in a trattoria that predates the resort is even more special when it's just you and the pizzaiolo.





Guests at Castelfalfi can partake in a private pizza making class in a trattoria that predates the ... [+] ANNA HAINES

Visitors can feel like they're Stanley Tucci wandering through the 61-acres of vineyards and near 100-acres of olive groves followed by a tasting of the resort's nine varieties of wine and four types of olives. The shoulder season is the best time for foodies to visit as olive oil harvest takes place in October and truffle hunting is best in November. While visiting in the spring offers no shortage of culinary delights as the menus at their five onsite restaurants are rooted in Tuscan tradition and source ingredients from the bounty of the estate.





The shoulder season is the best time for truffle hunting with a Castelfalfi guide.

CASTELFALFI

Those seeking a Tuscany of centuries' past will want to stay in the newly renovated historic tobacco warehouse which features 31 traditional rooms designed in authentic Tuscan style.

Internationally renowned French decorating firm Affine design collaborated with Italian studio Caberlon Caroppi to design the 115 other guest rooms in the hotel's main building opposite the warehouse. Featuring a warm, earthy color palette and furnishings made of natural materials like wood and wrought iron, the contemporary rooms reflect the surrounding tranquility of the Tuscan landscape. The spacious signature suites and further removed farmhouse-inspired villas, which have multiple bedrooms and their own pool, are ideal for families or those who want to feel like they're living in Tuscany.





A junior suite at Castelfalci. CASTELFALFI

The only experience at Castelfalci that is not inspired by the destination is the newly renovated 16,000-square-foot RAKxa Wellness Spa, created in collaboration with coveted Thai wellness brand RAKxa. The Bangkok-based retreat center worked with Castelfalci to create three exclusive massage treatments. The ‘Good Night Sleep’ massage incorporates singing bowls and works with the body’s energy points to facilitate deeper slumbers; the ‘Tension Release’ combines Thai massage techniques with stretching to remove blockages along the body’s meridian lines and improve circulation; and the ‘Seven Chakra Hot Stone Massage’ aims to restore harmony to the body using warm natural stones and crystals.





Castelfalfi's five dining concepts source ingredients from the bounty of the estate.  
ANNA HAINES

Beyond the Thai-influenced treatments, the spa offers a wide variety of facial, body and beauty treatments, many of which incorporate essential oils and indigenous herbs sourced from the surrounding landscape. Guests seeking warmth during the chillier shoulder season will appreciate the heated indoor-outdoor pool, two saunas, Turkish bath and sensory showers.



Castelfalfi indoor-outdoor pool is heated and open year-round. CASTELFALFI





Whether you're wandering the Medieval village, savoring a truffle-infused olive oil or hiking an empty trail through the rolling Tuscan hills, visiting Tuscany during the slow season provides the solitude necessary to experience the slow culture that made Tuscany into the coveted destination it is today.



**Anna Haines**

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